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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 25, 2005

No. 05-36

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ADF&G Advises Goose Hunters to Check for Regulation Changes

(Juneau) – Alaskans planning to hunt geese on the Alaska Peninsula, in the Aleutians, and in Western Alaska are reminded to check their waterfowl regulations for changes in hunting seasons and bag limits. Game Management Unit (GMU) 9, the Alaska Peninsula, and GMU 18, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, have reduced harvest opportunities due to population declines. However, GMU 10, the Aleutian Islands, will be open to hunting geese for the first time in 30 years. For more complete regulations online, see <http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov/>.

Following a long, gradual decline in the Pacific brant population, which has worsened in recent years, the season for brant in Game Management GMU 9 will be from September 17 to October 16, considerably shorter than in recent years. This includes Izembek Lagoon near Cold Bay, an extremely popular location for fall brant hunters.

The Pacific brant population has declined steadily over the past 30 years. This year's annual January count along the Pacific coast from Alaska to Mexico totaled a record low of 101,400 birds. Under a Pacific Flyway Council management plan, the current 3-year average count below 110,000 calls for reducing harvest in all coastal states.

The Cackling goose population that breeds on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and winters in the Pacific northwest rebounded through cooperation by hunters from less than 30,000 in 1985 to 200,000 by 1997. Lack of recent continued growth, however, resulted in decisions to reduce harvest this year. In Alaska GMU 9E and 18, limits for dark geese (4 per day) now include no more than two Canada geese. More stringent restrictions will be implemented in western Washington and Oregon.

The bright spot this year is a Canada goose hunting season in GMU 10. For 30 years, goose hunting has been closed in the Aleutian Islands to protect the Aleutian Canada goose. In the late 1960s there may have been as few as 800 of these small geese and the bird was listed as endangered. Through removal of foxes on nesting islands and hunting restrictions throughout the Pacific Flyway, the population was delisted in 2001 and has grown to more than 60,000 geese. The opening of hunting in GMU 10 marks one of the final transitions to normal management for this population.

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